



Portland Division

[Home](#) • [Portland](#) • [Press Releases](#) • 2016 • [FBI Statement on Officer-Involved Shooting](#)

FBI Statement on Officer-Involved Shooting

FBI Portland
March 08, 2016

Beth Anne Steele
[REDACTED]

The following statement was issued by FBI Portland Special Agent in Charge Gregory T. Bretzing at a press conference in Bend, Oregon on March 8, 2016.

On January 26, 2016, along Highway 395 in Harney County, Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers and FBI agents put themselves in harm's way as part of the effort to bring the situation at the refuge to an end peacefully. I can assure that no one, from the Director of the FBI down to each and every employee who was working in Harney County, wanted this situation to end in violence or death.

However, Mr. Finicum chose to break the law, put other people's lives in danger, and, as the investigation shows, provoke a confrontation with law enforcement. As the sheriff and DA have shown, the threat Mr. Finicum posed to OSP troopers and agents along Highway 395 on that day was real and imminent, and certainly justified the use of deadly force by law enforcement.

As you have heard today, the investigation conducted by the Tri-County Major Incident Team determined that OSP troopers fired three shots at Mr. Finicum's vehicle as it approached the law enforcement barricade at a high rate of speed, the vehicle nearly hitting a law enforcement officer. The team also determined OSP troopers fired three additional shots that struck and killed Mr. Finicum as he reached for his weapon after exiting his vehicle.

The county's investigation also indicated that, in between the two series of shots fired by OSP troopers, one, and possibly two, additional shots were fired by law enforcement as Mr. Finicum was exiting the vehicle after hitting the snow bank. As autopsy results confirm, neither of these shots struck Mr. Finicum. The question of who fired these shots has not been resolved. Upon learning this, and given the FBI presence on scene, I immediately contacted our Inspection Division which notified the United States Department of Justice's Office of Inspector General which is currently investigating this matter.

Because this is an ongoing matter, it would be inappropriate for me or anyone to speculate or comment further, but I can tell you that the FBI is fully cooperating with the Office of Inspector General.

Since January 2, the FBI has worked in partnership with Harney County and our law enforcement partners throughout the state to resolve the situation at the refuge. Since that time, hundreds upon hundreds of FBI employees traveled to Burns with the sole purpose of bringing this situation to a peaceful conclusion.

Working together with our partners, we have been able to do just that. The refuge is clear and will be re-opening soon. People who once feared for their safety are back in their homes. Those who chose to break the law will have their day in court. Life is not yet completely normal, but we are on the path to reconciliation and recovery.

Portland Division Links

Portland Home

Contact Us

- Overview
- Territory/Jurisdiction

News and Outreach

- Press Room | Stories
- In Your Community

About Us

- Our People & Capabilities
- What We Investigate
- Our Partnerships
- Portland History

Wanted by the FBI - Portland

FBI Jobs

